Department of History
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Undergraduate Program Guide

B.A. (Research) in History
2015-2019

Shiv Nadar University
P.O. Shiv Nadar University, Greater Noida,
Gautam Buddha Nagar, U.P. 201314
Tel : (0) 120 3819100
W : www.SNU.edu.in
The BA major in history provides students with a basic grounding in the history of South Asia, with the development of skills in research, analysis and quantitative reasoning that are essential to a thorough grounding in the liberal arts.

Core Courses

The department offers a wide selection of core course options, which introduce students to broader themes and subject areas and to major historiographical approaches. Core courses have no Pre-requisites and are designed as an introductory to the disciplines of history and archaeology. Students opting for a major in history are required to take 8 core courses from our course catalogue. Present course offerings include Global Histories of Food, Archaeology of South Asia and Early Historic South Asia.

Departmental Electives

Elective courses are specialized courses designed and taught by research faculty. The class sizes for departmental electives are small, allowing the instructor to work closely with students to impart specialised subject training in either historical or archaeological methods, and may include the opportunity to work with primary materials. The departmental offerings reflect the research expertise of the faculty and many of our courses embrace themes and historiographical approaches that are on the cutting-edge of research today. Elective courses require departmental Pre-requisites and students interested in taking an elective course option are advised to consult the course catalogue to ensure they satisfy the Pre-requisite requirements. A major student is required to take a total of 12 elective courses, over semesters 5 to 8.

Undergraduate Thesis

In the final semester the department offers students the option of writing an undergraduate thesis, in lieu of 2 elective courses; however, this option may only be exercised in conjunction with faculty approval.

Liberal Arts Curriculum Approach

The department of history is committed to the University’s liberal arts curriculum approach, combining flexibility and choice in allowing students to take a number of courses in disciplines other than their chosen majors’ discipline; these refer to the University Wide Electives (UWE) credits. University guidelines require a student to take a minimum of 90 credits over the course of 3 years to graduate with a BA liberal arts degree, of which 60 credits must be taken in the major discipline and the remaining 30 credits from UWE options. Students enrolled for a major in history may take 30 UWE credits (10 courses) from adjacent disciplines in Sociology,
English, Economics, Media & Communications, Education, Art, Design and Performing Arts with the option to take a minor in these subjects, if they accumulate 18 course credits in any of these disciplines.

In addition, in the first year of undergraduate training, students in history majors will take 3 SHSS-wide courses in *English Writing Colloquium, Introduction to Logic and Scientific Reasoning* and an interdisciplinary seminar on *Modernity: A Critical Exploration* co-taught by SHSS faculty.

**Minor in History**

A student must earn a minimum of 18 course credits to graduate with a minor in history. The department does not set a criterion of compulsory courses for a minor’s degree but all students from outside the SHSS must get a high grade (A- to A) in the Academic Writing course before being admitted to a course in history.

**COURSE LIST**

**COMPULSORY COURSES (Offered in Year 1)**
- ENG. 104 Academic Writing Colloquium
- ECO. 101 Introduction to Logic and Scientific Reasoning
- SOC. 101 Modernity: An Interdisciplinary Exploration

**DEPARTMENTAL CORE COURSES (8 courses to be taken in Years 1 and 2)**
- HIST. 105 Early Historic South Asia
- HIST. 105 Modern India 1857-1947
- HIST. 201 Archaeology of South Asia
- HIST. 202 Ancient Indian Social History
- HIST. 204 State and Society in South Asia, 300 AD – 1000 AD
- HIST. 208 Social Change in South Asia, c. 1860 – 1940s
- HIST. 209 Economic History of India, 1800s-1960s
- HIST. 211 Global Histories of Food
- HIST. 212 State and Cult in Early Medieval South Asia

**DEPARTMENTAL ELECTIVES (12 courses to be taken in Years 3 and 4)**
- HIST. 301 Theories and Methods in Archaeology
- HIST. 302 Utilization and Interpretation of Archaeological Evidence
- HIST. 303 Nomads, Pastoralists and State
- HIST. 304 State and Society in Mauryan India
- HIST. 305 Medicine and the Raj
- HIST. 307 Orientalism and Colonial Knowledge, South Asia
- HIST. 309 Crime and Punishment in the Modern World
- HIST. 310 Health and Mental Illness in an Age of Empire
## Major in History | Coursework and Credits Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Writing</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>3 Credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A course for all students in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logic and Scientific Reasoning</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A course on quantitative methods specially designed for students in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modernity: A Critical Exploration</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A course taught by the SHSS faculty across the disciplines</td>
<td></td>
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### 8 Core Courses in History
Core courses introduce students to the fields of history and archaeology. These are broad survey courses, organised around a particular theme or subject area.

- Students can choose their course from a wide range of departmental options.

### 12 Departmental Electives
Selected from a wide range of course offerings covering diverse areas and sub-fields

- Students may opt to write an undergraduate thesis in lieu of two elective courses in the final semester. This will be written under the guidance of an undergraduate thesis adviser.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>23 Majors Courses</th>
<th>4 Years</th>
<th>69 credits</th>
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**Total Credits:** 69

**Credits Breakdown:**
- 8 x 3 credits = 24 credits
- 12 x 3 credits = 36 credits

Total: 69 credits
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Departmental Core Courses

HIST. 105 Early Historic South Asia (M. Visvanathan)

This course charts the slow transition, rise and spread of cities and states in early historic South Asia. Beginning from c.1500 BCE and extending into the early centuries CE, it shows how the development of urban civilization was marked by a host of interconnected factors: the rise of monarchies, the development of trading networks, the emergence of writing, and the spread of religious groups. By bringing together analyses of textual and archaeological data, it aims to shed light on this complex and dynamic period in the subcontinent's past. (2:1:0) Pre-requisite: None; Class size: TBA

HIST. 106 Modern India, 1857-1947 (S. Roy Chaudhury)

This course deals with the social, economic and political dynamics of India under the British Raj. The course looks into India’s colonial encounter and the way it changed many aspects of pre-colonial India and helped shape modern South Asia. The course will examine the nature of the colonial apparatus in the wake of the Uprising of 1857, and the background of the steady expansion of the social basis of power. It would look at the rise of the Indian public space in the second half of the 19th century, and explore the manner in which both the colonial intervention in Indian society and the rise of the Indian public sphere ultimately shaped the rise of not only the idea of the Indian ‘nation’ but also a myriad set of identities at the national and the subnational levels. The course would then look at the negotiation carried out at different levels by and among the myriad forms of identities within the larger landscape of resistance to colonial rule. (2:1:0) Pre-requisite: None; Class size: 15

HIST 201 Archaeology of South Asia (J. Menon)

The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to certain themes in the archeology of early South Asia. Some of these themes are settlements and regions, urbanism, exchange, technology, status and power, social transmission of knowledge, as well as religion and ritual. Many of these issues are being investigated in novel ways and strategies of studying them are actually still being evolved. This course is structured through intensive readings around each theme. (2:1:0) Pre-requisite: None; Class size: 15

HIST. 202 Ancient Indian Social History (M. Visvanathan)

The study of social history represents an exciting arena in understanding India's ancient past. This course seeks to introduce students to the field, focusing in particular on issues of gender, class and caste. In the place of glorified pictures of the ancient past, such studies allow us to glimpse an ancient world peopled by men, women and their concerns, mediated by ideologies and social groupings. Emphasis will also be placed on questions of methodology, showing how an integrated study of texts, inscriptions and material culture can help us understand the complexities and contradictions of ancient societies, removed from us in time. (2:1:0) Pre-requisite: None; Class size: 15

HIST. 204 State and Society in South Asia, 300 AD – 1000 AD (A. Dandekar)

In this core course we would examine the nature of state in the post-Mauryan phase up to the beginnings of the early medieval period and would critically introduce the various dimensions
that enter in the discourse with notions of segmentary state, integrated polity and the debate on feudalism. Here it would introduce the major models that theoretically attempt an explanation of the transformation and extension of ‘state’ in the early medieval up to almost the sixteenth century. The main aim of the course would be to open up the discussion on the nature of state and take it beyond the stereo type of feudalism debate to examine the various other dimensions of the evolution of the notion of state. (2:1:0) Pre-requisite: None; Class size: 15

HIST. 208 Social Change in South Asia, c. 1860 – 1940s (S. Dutta)

The period since 1860 has been a time of deep-seated and persistent social change in Indian society, as a result of the imposition of colonial rule. This course introduces students to the literature on modern South Asian history with an emphasis on the diversity of approaches that characterize the historiography of the region, from political history to subaltern studies and studies of culture and economic development. Topics will include, the idea of the Indian nation; peasant protests, famine and poverty; life in urban cities; changes in the lives of women; science, medicine and technology; the construction of crime and social deviance. (2:1:0) Pre-requisite: None; Class size: 15

HIST. 209 Economic History of India, 1800s-1960s (R. Bandyopadhyay)

The course is intended to acquaint the students with the old and the new perspectives in economic history of colonial and early postcolonial India. It focuses on the agrarian and the industrial, the artisanal and the petty commodity sectors of the economy. The course highlights the evolving structures of inter-sectoral linkages in both the credit and the labor markets. (2:1:0) Pre-requisite: None; Class size: 15

HIST. 211 Global Histories of Food (S. Dutta)

Are we what we eat? The act of eating was rooted in a finite moment yet, food welds together time. In eating, the body is linked to all else in life, and the present to traditions, memory and the past. This course surveys the history of food in its wide-ranging cultural, economic, environmental and global contexts. Topics include: the domestication of plants and animals; the medieval spice trade; the Columbian exchange and impact of New World foods on Old World diets; sugar, slavery and the plantation economy; the structure of meals and the cultivation of taste and manners; famine, food riots and social movements; recipes, cookbooks and formation of resilient identities. Within these subject groupings, the core themes of the production, circulation and consumption of food across time will be examined. Each class is keyed to a set of readings. Some lectures will address the allocated readings directly, others will provide contextualizing historical or theoretical discussion. (2:1:0) Pre-requisite: None; Class size: 15

HIST. 212 State and Cult in Early Medieval South Asia (A. Dandekar)

This course will look at the issues of early medieval state and the formation of cult against the geographical context of semi-arid belt of the Deccan, for the early medieval period. In particular this course will consider the history of the pastoralists and the cult of Viththal at Pandarpur as an expression of a relationship between that forms the basis of an early medieval state. The class combines lectures with graded discussions. Students are expected to read assigned texts. (2:1:0) Pre-requisite: None; Class size: 15
Departmental Electives

HIST. 301 Theories and Methods in Archaeology (J. Menon)

Theoretical paradigms in archaeology have changed over time resulting in the discipline evolving from a treasure-hunting enterprise to a scientific endeavour. The practices and data-generation techniques of archaeology have also evolved taking a trajectory towards a greater involvement of technology. The course is intended to introduce the student to the way that archaeology has been practised globally as well as in India. (2:1:0) Pre-requisite: HIST. 201
Class size: 10

HIST. 302 Utilization and Interpretation of Archaeological Evidence (J. Menon)

This is a seminar-style course where students will be encouraged to work on a particular theme using archaeological evidence. The theme could vary from the historiographical to the actual use of primary archaeological material. The purpose is to train students in the analysis and use of archaeological evidence. Students will have to write a 20-25 page paper in order to earn their credits. This course is intended for students interested in archaeology and will help as a step towards the writing of the undergraduate dissertation in the final semester. (2:2:0) Pre-requisites: HIST. 201 and 301
Class size: 10

HIST. 303 Nomads, Pastoralists and State (A. Dandekar)

What is pastoralism? What place has it in the context of historical developments in South Asia? What place does it occupy in the context of state formation processes? These questions will be intensively explored in this elective. It will enter into the definitional issues regarding nomadism, pastoral nomadism and pastoralism in an intensive manner. The elective will mainly focus on the Deccan Peninsula and examine the state formation processes from the perspective of the pastoral nomads and pastoralists. It will examine the location of sedentary agriculture systems and locate them in the overall agro-pastoral contexts. It will also examine the markers of pastoral systems in the Deccan. This elective would engage with a variety of sources that range from oral tradition to archaeology as it is obtained in the context of pastoralists in the Deccan. (2:1:0) Pre-requisite: HIST. 204 or HIST. 212
Class size: 10

HIST. 304 State and Society in Mauryan India (M. Visvanathan)

For an earlier generation of historians, the Mauryan state symbolized the grandeur of the 'first Indian empire'. Such a perception was based on a reading of Kautilya's Arthasastra which speaks of a powerful monarch, a centralized bureaucracy, and an all-pervasive political domain. But recent studies have sought to question these grand claims, showing how the reality of state-formation was much more complicated and little exists to indicate such all-encompassing political control. This course seeks to introduce students to the debates surrounding the Mauryan state, but will also focus on reading the sources of this period. Using the edicts of Ashoka as a focal point, we will discuss issues such as the interaction between state and society, the nature of politics and propaganda, the archaeological remnants of 'empires', and the spread of religious and cultural influences across the South Asian region and beyond. (2:1:0) Pre-requisite: HIST. 105 or HIST. 202
Class size: 10

HIST. 305 Medicine and the Raj (S. Roy Chaudhury)

This course will explore the ways in which medicine became entwined with life in 19th and 20th century British India. Today, our ways of responding to “anti life” like disease and illness is
informed by the introduction of modern medicine as a scientific and technological endeavour in this period. We will explore the historical circumstances in which this alignment occurred, and inquire as to what was colonial about it. Effectively, we will be studying how the peculiarities of its birth and dissemination in British India informed its career, as well as affected the lives of the rulers and the subjects, the practitioners and the patients. (2:1:0) Pre-requisite: HIST. 103, HIST. 206 or HIST. 208 Class size: 10

HIST. 307 Orientalism and Colonial Knowledge, South Asia (S. Dutta)

This is a seminar-style course that introduces students to some of the major issues in the cultural and intellectual history of modern South Asia. Specifically, it explores the cultural production, consumption and circulation of the western scholarship relating to the Orient that characterise European overseas expansion in the modern era. The seminar takes at its basis, Edward Said’s Orientalism (1978) and his seminal assertion that European political domination of the Orient and the knowledge relating to its land, peoples, and cultures were interdependent.

The course will examine various forms of knowledge production and their use within the colonised world, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The topics covered will include: anthropology and law; census mapping, cartography, philology and museums displays; science and nationalist discourse. Within these subject groupings, the seminar will emphasise three themes: the use of technology; the construction of imperial identities and their modes of representations; and the appropriation of and resistance to these formulations. The reading material relates to British imperial circumstances in South Asia. However, students are encouraged to read outside of the suggested texts and place the discussion in a wider geopolitical context. (2:2:0) Pre-requisites: HIST. 208; Class size: 10

HIST. 309 Crime and Punishment in the Modern World (S. Dutta)

Violent crime evokes revulsion and interest. This elective course introduces students to some of the key themes of the global histories of crime and punishment, from the spectacle of early modern punishments, to the rise of the industrial penitentiary and criminology. In our study we will ask: How have the state and society attempted to address the problems of deviancy and social disorder? How might the relationship between morality, public opinion and the state’s monopoly over violence have changed over time? How does the pathologization of behaviour occur and how do we account for the criminalization of some acts or life-styles and the decriminalization of others?

Primary topics include the changing definitions of “deviancy” from the eighteenth century onwards; the birth of the industrial penitentiary and its world-wide export in the age of empire; architecture and spatial discipline; and of course, life inside of prisons. This is a seminar-style advanced elective option requiring weekly tutorials devoted to in-depth class discussions of primary and secondary materials. The course requires a departmental Pre-requisite and students are advised to ensure they fulfil entry requirements before opting for the class. (2:1:0) Pre-requisites: HIST. 208 Class size: 10

HIST. 310 Health and Mental Illness in an Age of Empire (S. Roy Chaudhury)

Franz Fanon (1925-1961) was a psychiatrist who practiced in Algeria during the anti-colonial war of resistance against France. His writings bear testimony to the deep psychological impact that colonialism had both on the colonized and the colonizer. In this course we will start with his essay titled “Medicine and Colonialism” in Dying Colonialism to focus on his treatment of the difference between the imperial metropolis and the colonial periphery, and their ramifications on the body and the psyche of the colonized. Then we will study how historical literature on medicine has treated this difference. These texts will help us think how race, gender and class emerged as sites of articulating difference through the representation of imperial medical concerns in the African continent and South Asian subcontinent. We will
have a chance to reflect on the relationship between the history of medical knowledge formation and the constitution of imperial medicine in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Finally we will interrogate Fanon’s position with reference to this scheme of exploration. (2:1:0) Pre-requisites: TBA Class size: 10